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The Radiant Road

BY

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Author of "Tangled in Stars," etc.



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To A. S. M.
("The Princess Alice")

Who has warmed with the radiance of her
spirit so many roads in life, this little
book is affectionately inscribed.



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THE RADIANT ROAD

There is a radiant road that lies
'Neath sombre, starred, or luminous skies,
And every sky is deep with meaning,
And big with hints of paradise.

Sometimes by fields of youth it burns,
Or up some strenuous steep it yearns,
 Or moves through Memory's haunted wood-
 land,
Or to Love's dreamful stream returns.

Whatever ills it struggles through,
Or rocks and snares be thick or few,
A gleam of some celestial splendor
Shows in its every drop of dew.

Ah, fellow-traveler, who reads
This slender rhyme and little heeds,
 'Tis we who tread that radiant highway
That to a larger radiance leads.

We who in doubt and sadness strive,
Whose earthly thoughts at earth arrive,
Would we could feel with lifted spirit
How blest a fate to be alive.

COME, O SPRING!

Come, O Spring ! unpack thy leaves,
Flood the boughs and flush the gloom ;
Brush the cheek of him who grieves
With a branch of apple-bloom.

Mock at care with all thy birds,
Pierce despair with all thy beams,
Write upon my heart the words
For the music of thy streams.

MY 'LEGACY

The little tree I planted out
And often muse upon,
May be alive to grow and thrive
And out into the sunlight strive,
When I am dead and gone.

So it shall be my legacy
To toilers in the sun.
So sweet its shade, each man and maid
May be induced to take a spade
And plant another one.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

When from my task I fain would steal,
And into vacuous langour slip,
With inward bleeding then I feel
My guardian angel's whip.

Or when to empty revelry
I give my spirit, though it sears
And shames that inner self, I see
My guardian angel's tears.

Or when I yield to grief, or fear,
Or scorn, or say that life is chaff,
Blown by an idle wind, I hear
My guardian angel's laugh.

THE SCHOOL OF PAIN

This is the hard school kept by Pain,
With pupils sad and white :
While some shed tears like falling rain
From dreary morn till night,

Some knit the brow and clench the fist,
And fill the heart with hate ;
And some cross languid wrist on wrist
And say Pain is their fate.

But those that study very hard,
And learn that Pain can bless,
Are sent out in a leafy yard
To play with Happiness.

POVERTY'S LOT

Poverty bought our little lot,
Flooded with daisy blooms;
Poverty built our little cot,
And furnished all its rooms.

Yet Peace leans over Labor's chair,
Joys at the fireside throng,
While up and down on Poverty's stair
Love sings the whole day long.

UNHEARD CRITICISM

I talked with you to-day, all three,
Two of you lurked unseen:
Yourself, the boy you used to be,
And the man you might have been.

You said that hopes to dead leaves turned,
That love was but a dream;
Ambition soon to ashes burned,
Joy was a fleeting gleam.

You never saw that constantly
They smiled at you unseen —
The ardent boy you used to be,
And the man you might have been.

EARTH'S ANGELS

Angel of Youth, how swift you flew !
Perhaps you're worth a sigh.
Angel of Love, good-bye to you —
Good-bye ! Good-bye !

Angel of Work, your sweet demand
My soul enliveneth,
Till on my hands you lay *your* hand,
Angel of Death !

THE WHITE GIFTS

These are thy gifts, O Life :
A white frost on the hair,
And a wintry whiteness on the cheek
That once was red and fair.

These are thy gifts, O Love :
A white frost on the veins,
And a deep-snow silence on the soul,
Where once were fiery pains.

And thy great gifts, O Death,
Are in the frost-bound frame,
The ice-locked lips, the white, white peace
That is too deep for name.

THE HOUSE WE USED TO LIVE IN

The house we used to live in looks at us
So wistfully as we go driving by.

The wind that makes its lone tree murmurous
Flies swiftly after with entreating sigh.

"Come back, come back," we hear it low
implore,

"Lift up the grass-choked gate, the earth-
stained door,
And enter in your childhood's home once more."

Ah, no, let us make merry with light speech
Of newer days, and thrust the past aside.

Close to that door the baby used to reach

The knob and play with it — before he died.
He used to sleep on the broad window-sill,
A sunbeam on his curls. No, not that hill,
This level road. Drive fast—oh, faster still !

How small it was ! Before the birds have grown
They lie so warmly in one tiny nest;

But all the world is theirs when they are flown,
And foreign roofs replace the mother's breast.

Ah, well, God careth. See, before us now,
The ampler home beneath its stately bough.
Lift up the saddened heart and clear the brow.

For in that empty nest beyond the hill

Are blessed shadows at immortal ease :
The sun-crowned baby on the window-sill,

The happy children underneath the trees.
Old house, look not so piteous ! thou art
Of larger lives the very sweetest part,
The first love of the unforgetting heart.

LEGACIES

Unto my friends I give my thoughts,
Unto my God my soul,
Unto my foe I leave my love —
That is of life the whole.

Nay, there is something — a trifle — left ;
Who shall receive this dower ?
See, Earth Mother, a handful of dust —
Turn it into a flower.

TO THE MARK

To the mark goes the ship,
Bird and boat and booming train ;
To the mark go eye and lip
Deeply loved that love again.

To the mark the arrow sings,
Planets move and rains descend ;
To the mark the hammer rings,
To the mark speaks friend with friend.

To the mark goes axe and plow.
Shame upon thy listless aim
If it glance aside, and thou
Fail to give thy work thy name.

WHEN WE CEASE TO TOIL AND SUFFER

When we cease to toil and suffer and beneath
the falling leaves,

Take the long, long sleep that comes to all,
Will an angel come to comfort every soul that
sits and grieves,

With a message clear as writing on a wall;

Saying, "She that passed away, though her
feet were made of clay,

Bore a heart as chaste as gold;
Though she wore the common yoke, every
syllable she spoke

Was uplifting, love-controlled.

No indifference or disdain kept her free from
others' pain,

Life was precious to her — every drop;
For the querulous complaint, for the breath of
scandal faint,

She had never time to stop;

She has gone, but still her face, like a sunbeam,
haunts the place,

And the memory of her foot upon the stair,
Like a breeze upon the brow, like a perfume
from a bough,

Puts an end to sorrow, mourning and despair."

When the silent voices call, and the days and
years shall fall,

Silent fall, like the leaves upon the lea,
Will the angel say such words of you and me?

THE FAILURE

A Failure, who had ne'er achieved
Self victory, at last lay dead.
"Poor Failure!" thus his neighbors grieved.
"Poor miserable wretch," they said,
"His weakness was the worst of crimes,
He failed at least a thousand times."

Meanwhile the Failure gave to God
His vain attempts. Remorsefully
And prostrate on the skyey sod,
"I failed a thousand times," said he.
"Welcome!" rang out the heavenly chimes,
"He strove—he strove a thousand times."

THE PRICE

O ardent youth who covets truth,
And follows its decrees,
Remember this: whatever bliss
Awaits thee, 'tis not ease;
No, ne'er shalt thou find ease.

O loving heart, where'er thou art,
The tumult in the vein
And in the soul is not the whole
Of life. For thee is pain;
No love but hath its pain.

O ye who strive, the fates that drive
You forward in your quest,
Will give in strife your deepest life
And not in empty rest;
No joy for you in rest.

THE BATTLE

On one side stands the world-destroyer, Death,
And on the other, oh, most piteous strife,
An infant with a rose leaf's look and breath,
A baby fighting for its little life.

Death had seen much of anguish, dull and wild,
And terrible and sharp-edged as a knife;
But this might move e'en Death, this stricken
child,
This baby struggling for its little life.

SOUL AND BODY

The body says, "I am thirsty,"
The body says, "I am cold,"
The body says, "I am weary,"
And last of all, "I am old."

And for its thirst there is water,
And shelter warm in the blast,
And for its ache there is slumber;
But it dies, it dies at last.

But I am a soul, please heaven,
And though I freeze in my cage,
Or burn in a sleepless fever,
I shall live untouched of age.

TO A YOUNG CHILD

Sweet infant, lately born,
Almost I envy you
Your little heart un worn,
Your little senses new.

You sleep and sleep — the spell
Of sleep is like a chain ;
Ah, once I slept as well,
So shall I sleep again !

Soon, soon your cup of life
Shall run in wine and foam ;
And afterward come strife,
And hurts, and thoughts of home.

Your first act on this earth —
This vale of tears and mist —
Was but to wail your birth,
Poor infant pessimist !

My last act ere I die,
When fades the final mile,
And fails the final sigh,
I think will be to smile.

But should you linger near
That happy smile to see,
I truly hope, my dear,
You will not envy me.

A MEETING

Beautiful body and beautiful soul,
They met on the street one day.
And the beautiful spirit's compassion stole
Through her ugly eyes of gray;

And the dark soul's pity showed its face
Through her lovely eyes of blue;
But to help each other's evil case
Was out of their power to do.

A LINE FROM EMERSON

To thy soul's highest instincts O be true!
Though thick around thy heaven-girt solitude
The earth's low aims, low thoughts, low wants
shall teem.
The myriad voices of the world shall sue
With scorn, persuasive wile, or clamors rude.
"But thou, God's darling, heed thy private
dream!"

STRENGTH

For strength we ask
For the ten thousand times repeated task,
The endless smallnesses of every day.

No, not to lay
My life down in the cause I cherish most,
That were too easy. But whate'er it cost,
To fail no more
In gentleness toward the ungentle, nor
In love toward the unlovely, and to give
Each day I live,
To every hour with outstretched hand its meed
Of not-to-be-regretted thought or deed.

WORK

We must work to live,
Not body-life alone but soul-life.
If to our work ourselves we do not give,
Our thoughts, our aspirations, and our whole
life,
Then days become a torture, moments wound,
The lightest hours are leaden at the core,
And oftentimes we hear that awful sound—
Time's ocean, with its spirit-crushing roar.

THE BRIDE OF DEATH.

But tell us of the bride, we said.
" So one with him she seemed to be,
The bridegroom's kiss upon her lips
Lay almost visibly.

Her dress? Oh, roses, roses white,
That heaped the hands, the neck, the breast
Of her the whitest rose of all
That ever bridegroom pressed.

A glad look? Yea, the raptured look
Of one that drops from out her slim,
Sweet hands all other gifts of life
To hold them out to him.

Her dower? She brought him nothing save
Her loveliness, her life, her breath;
He gave her wealth. And title? Yea,
The old, old name of Death."

PITY ME NOT

Pity me not: it makes me pitiable.
Grieve not for me: 'twill set me grieving, too.
Come not forbodingly, but courage-full,
And speak the shining word that's strong and true.

If you would have me fearless, have no fears;
If you would have me light and sorrow-free,
Then give your steps the music of the spheres,
Make your eye steadfast as eternity.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

Unto the diamond with a flaw
The perfect pebble spoke :
" Alas, poor sister, some great law
Of heaven you have broke,
" Since Imperfection's curse I see
Whene'er your form I view;
But cheer up ! Some day you may be
A perfect pebble, too."

BEREAVEMENT

In the far deeps of consciousness,
Something that lies profoundly sleeping
Awakes to life beneath the stress
Of heart-sore weeping.

Some certainty, some final strength,
From which there can be no appealing,
An inward sureness that at length
Shall work our healing.

How strange it is ! The dark, dark path
That seems to lead to blackness only,
Will surely bring us peace. It hath
Its angel ! 'ly,

Who at the parting of the ways
Awaits us, for our grieving clearer,
And to our dulled, earth-blinded gaze
Brings heaven nearer.

THE AWAKENING

An average man awoke one night,
And thought of his past in the pale moonlight;
At times he muttered, at times he moaned,
And once he very distinctly groaned,
At which his guardian spirit inquired
What secret cause this dole inspired.
"Alas, why ask? I'm thinking," said he,
"About the people I used to be."

"There's the simpleton I was when — well,
It really would hardly do to tell;
And the unutterable ass
I was when — but we'll let that pass;
And the awful idiot I was when —
No, don't let's speak of *that* again;
And the inconceivable fool I made
Of myself when — *why* don't memories fade,
Or drown, or fly, or die in a hole
Instead of eternally burning the soul?
But at any rate, you now can see
Why I mourn o'er the people I used to be."

The angel smiled with as undefiled
A glance as that of a little child;
And said, "I am musing happily
About the people you're going to be:
The soul that has learned to break its chains,
The heart grown tenderer through its pains,
The mind made richer for its thought,
The character remorse has wrought
To far undreamed capacities,
The will that sits, a king, at ease.

Nay, marvel not for I plainly see
And joy in the people you're going to be."

The average man felt a purer light
About his soul than the moon-ray bright.
For once no evil spirit jeered
And the average man was strangely cheered.

A PROFITABLE LOSS

There came a little blind boy to steal my heart
away,
Then said I, " You little blind boy, I'll have to
say you nay ;
For I store my honey in it,
And I keep my money in it,
And I need it every minute of the day."

He stole it, did the blind boy, in spite of all my
wrath,
But surely she that hath not hath more than she
that hath ;
For the air is sweet with honey,
And the earth is rich with money,
And the twain of them make sunny all my path.
And if any sage should ask of me with corrugated
brow,
Why I do not wish my heart back, I only could
avow
It's because a little money,
And a small amount of honey,
Would seem rather sadly funny to me now.

TO MY FRIEND

Forget not, dearest, when thou goes
On high or homely tasks intent,
Through summer blooms or winter snows
With thee my thoughts are blent.

That howso harsh the city's din,
Or solitary seem thy place,
Thou still art folded safely in
My brooding heart's embrace.

HIS TURN

A good soul once, not without qualms,
Knocked at the gates eternal,
And begged of Lazarus an alms
For use in realms infernal.

"The rich man of whose crumbs you ate
Needs water. O surprise him
With just one drop." He smiled sedate :
"I fear 'twould pauperize him ;

"And then, you know, I can't revoke
My rule, which is unwavering,
I never give to wealthy folk
Unless they are deserving."

LIPS AND EYES

As I passed her house I thought I would call and
take her by surprise.

"Why, how do you do?" said her lovely lips;
"what kept you away?" asked her eyes.

"I doubted my welcome," I sadly said, and spoke
without disguise.

"Are you sure of it now?" asked her laughing lips,
"You know you are sure," said the eyes.

"I have tried my utmost and more," I said, "to
stifle my heart's vain cries;"

"It's a serious case," said the careless lips; "it is
for us," said the eyes.

"Your cruel words dug the grave of Hope, and
in Hope's grave Love lies;"

"White lies or black?" asked the scoffing lips,
"Oh, piteous sight," said the eyes.

"But now I must go, for I sail to-night, and
time unpitying flies;"

"Don't let me keep you," exclaimed the lips;
"do let us keep you," the eyes.

She gave me a cold, cold hand to take, and
we said our last good-byes;
And then as I feared her chilly lips I kissed her
on the eyes.

A man can hear two languages at once if he only
tries;

"I don't see how you *dare*," said the lips; "but
we see," said the eyes.

THE POET'S SPRING

"Don't send me any spring poems after February 21st."—Letter from an Editor.

When January's icy beard
Shakes like a rattling bough,
The poet's heart is sweetly cheered,
'Tis springtime with him now.
The streamlets flow, the warm winds ebb,
Although the pipes have burst,
For summer "pomes" are due on Febr-
Ruay 21st.

The yellow dandelions gild
The snowdrifts eight feet high,
The bluebird's song of joy is spilled
Beneath an iron sky.
How sweet on zero days the web
Of fancies, poet-nursed,
And sad that blossoms fade on Febr-
Ruay 21st.

Ah, would I were an editor,
While wintry blasts endure,
A daisy time with daisy rhyme
I'd have, you may be sure.
I'd bathe in buttercups *ad lib*,
And all my buds should burst
And bloom till long long after Febr-
Ruay 21st.

THE RICH MR. SMITH.

As past the magnificent palace we bowled,
The driver explained this exhibit in gold
Was made by the millionaire, Everard Smith,
A man whom Success was on pleasant terms with.
But while we exclaimed and admired and oh, oh'd,
Till the horses were turned at the bend of the road,
He corrected himself : "It belongs to his kith
And his kin; he is now the late Mr. Smith."
Somehow that word "late" struck us cold as the
chill
Of a new-opened grave when the night-wind is
still,
And it made wealth and splendor the veriest myth,
As we sighed in a whisper, "Oh, poor Mr. Smith."

WHEN TIME TURNS

When ashes go back to fire,
And the cataract to the upper stream,
And fulfillment to desire,
And the rugged fact to airy dream,
Then shall dead youth awake from its long
sleep,
And life like a tall, slim, silver fountain leap.

When the mount becomes a slope,
And the dead leaf a pointed bud,
And memory is hope,
And dying limbs bear dancing blood,
Then shall young love—then shall young love
return,
And the old love tales make the spirit burn.

HONEY AND SALT

Rose-leaf damsel, tell me this—
 You with your seventeen years—
How much honey is in a kiss,
 And how much salt in tears?

“ Nay,” she said, “ such words, I wis,
 Are not for my maiden ears.
How should I know the sweet of a kiss
 Or the bitterness of tears?”

White-haired woman, whose grief and bliss
 Overrun seventy years,
Tell me true, does the sweet of a kiss
 Outweigh the bitter of tears?

“ Yea,” she said, “ but the bitterness
 Enmixed with the sweet appears :
My life’s most tender and treasured kiss
 Is kept in the brine of tears.”

THE DEAD FACE

The pale moon and the pale, pale face
 Come back again to me ;
The pale moon to its skyey place,
 And the face to memory.

Out of the darkness they arise,
 And with the dawn depart —
The moon that lights the empty skies,
 The face that lights my heart.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE THORN

A nightingale quite forlorn

Thus made her plaint to the morn :

"I've hunted in vain," ran the pitiful strain,

"And I can't find a sign of a thorn.

There's nothing to make me sad,

There's not a thorn to be had,

All the rest of my years" — here she burst into
tears —

"I'll have to be merry and glad.

I always sing my best

When a cruel thorn is pressed

(So my friends have said and I've frequently read)

Quite close to my tender breast.

O birds with grievances great,

O men with grievances small,

Think what it would be, if you, like me,
Had never a grievance at all!"

The moral, my little dear,

Is quite remarkably clear ;

When lessons are long and things go wrong,

And everyone's acting queer,

Don't murmur and bewail,

Don't rue the day you were born,

But think of the poor, poor nightingale,

Who hadn't a sign of a thorn.

THE HAUNTED ROOM

The sign on his heart read, " Room to Let,"
And I thought I would just look through;
The location was good, terms fair, and yet
I feared it would hardly do;

For while I inspected the walls and floor
And furnishings of the heart,
A ghost came in at the bolted door
And gave me a sort of a start.

A ghost of a girl with a movement frail
As a deep-grassed stream. Her face
Like a moon ray wandered, ah, how pale,
In the glow of that rosy place.

THE MOONLIT RIVER.

Dear other self, whose love is more to me
Than to a fevered soul are sudden gleams
In desert wastes of swiftly flowing reams,
In this drear land my spirit faints for thee.
Far off across the empty miles I see
Thy radiant face; its tender yearning seems
A moonlit river that, within my dreams,
Flows on and on into eternity.

My glad soul hastens to the river side,
And launches forth. Oh, joy beyond compare,
To feel the heavenly winds that blowing wide,
Fill the white sail with an ethereal air,
To see within the tremulous deep tide
That all the stars of God are mirrored there.

LOVE AND POVERTY

"When Poverty comes in at the door Love flies out of the window."

[Old Saying.

"O do not from the window fly,"
Said Poverty to Love,
"But to my bosom come and I
Will keep you there, my dove.

"My harshness needs your gentleness,
My grief your tender tone,
Your breath would bless my spirit as
A rose-vine wreathes a stone."

So sweet Love flew to Poverty;
She blest him heart and head.
When lo, he vanished utterly
And Wealth stood in his stead.

And that is why, with smiling air,
The ancient stories tell
That Poverty and Love did ne'er
Beneath the same roof dwell.

THE RED ROSE

What is that on your breast, my lady?
Burning — with lips apart?
“ Oh, that is a rose,
The fairest that grows,
And its thorn is in my heart.”

Why are its lips so red, my lady?
“ I for its sake have bled;
My life-blood glows
In the life of the rose,
Therefore its lips are red.”

Why is its breath so sweet, my lady?
Hasting my pulse's beat.
“ My deep love flows
Through the lips of the rose,
Therefore its breath is sweet.”

Why does it wither and die, my lady?
“ There is the stinging smart:
The red rose dies,
But forever lies
That cruel thorn in my heart.”

WHEN I AM WEARIEST

O love who comes when I am weariest,
And lifts my burden from me by a word,
Draw not too near, for as a wounded bird
Droops blindly to the shelter of its nest,
So would I feel my way unto thy breast.
Ah, why are God's best gifts on me conferred?
The transport of the heart, the spirit stirred
Yet softened, and this absolute sweet rest.

The dark and empty-handed day sets sail
On ruddy waves of sunset, leaving this
Dear joy beyond all power to conceal,
All power to give ut'rance. What avail
Dim words? You bring me all things save
the bliss
Of knowing how to tell the bliss I feel.

GOOD-BYE

Good-bye, my love; though multitudes of years
And miles and faces come between us twain,
Though I should never hear your voice again,
Still are you mine, mine, mine! Not by my
tears —

You never made them flow; nor by my fears,
For I was fearless born; but by the rain
Of joys that turned to seas of sunny grain
This heart that showed aforetime slender spears.

Now on my clouded day of life shall come
No loss. The streams of gold that poured
from suns
Unseen, have turned to gold this harvest heart;
I am all sunlight-colored, and the sum
Of by-gone happiness that through me runs
Will make you mine forever, though apart.

LOVE'S PHASES

Love has a thousand phases. Oftentimes
For very joy of her own life she weeps ;
Or like a timid, wistful child she creeps
To sheltering arms ; or like a spirit climbs
The white heights scaled by poets in their rhymes—
Imagination's lone and splendid steeps—
Or drifts with idle oar upon the deeps
Of her own soul to undiscovered climes.

Hers is the rapture of the dying saint,
The exultation of the mother when
Upon her breast her first-born faintly stirs
For the first time ; and every morn doth paint
Upon each rock and tree and stream and glen,
Some inextinguishable look of hers.

AUGUST IN NOVEMBER

On this bleak evening, pacing to and fro
The silent rooms beneath this lonely roof,
Noting the echo of a distant hoof,
Or the November winds that wildly blow,
One thought pursues me whereso'er I go—
As close entwined with me as warp to woof—
Dear love, no power can hold our hearts aloof,
Because I love you so ! I love you so !

To-night your shadowy form to me is real,
As when your visible presence made more blue
The August sky and turned to song its rain.
Gone is the storm — the solitude — I feel
You near to me. What can November do ?
For us midsummer days have come again.

AT PARTING

Good-bye ! Good-bye ! my soul goes after thee,
Quick as a bird that quickens on the wing,
Softly as winter softens into spring,
And as the moon sways to the swaying sea,
So is my spirit drawn resistlessly ;
Good-bye ! Yet closer round my life shall cling
Thy tenderness, the priceless offering
That drifts through distance daily unto me.

O eager soul of mine, fly fast, fly fast !
Take with thee hope and courage, thoughts that
thrill

The heart with gladness under sombre skies.
O living tenderness, that no sharp blast
Of bitter fate or circumstance can chill,
My life with thine grows strong, or fails, or dies.

THE SWIFTEST THOUGHT

O sounding winds that tirelessly are blowing
Through the wide starlit spaces of the night ;
O eager rains that sweep the distant height,
And restless streams impetuously flowing,
And clouds that will delay not in your going,
And ships that sail and vanish from the sight,
And happy birds that stay not in your flight,
And suns upon your skyey pathway glowing :—

Poor laggards all ! One tender thought outstrips
you.

Go, little thought, and tell my love from me
I care for him to-day as yesterday.

Ah, how its strength and swiftness doth eclipse
you !

For now the answer comes invisibly
And instantly, and in the surest way.

IN A DARK HOUR

Yes, yes, I know what you would say, and yet
Life is so sweet! life is so very sweet!
Leaves dancing in the sun make quick the beat
Of saddest heart, and Love must still forget
Life's toil and care, its fever and its fret.
How blue the sky shines through the summer's
heat,
How merrily the blood defies the sleet;
One golden hour illumines a gray year. Let
Those talk of tears who never knew relief;
For me the hoarded honey of the past
Outlives the wintry interval of pain;
Come loneliness, or lovelessness, or grief!
The memory of days too sweet to last
Shall make my heart run o'er with joy again.

THE HOUSE OF LOVE

My lover built a house for me,
And roofed it with his tender smile,
And walled it with his tender arms,
A little while — a little while ;

And warmed it with his flaming heart,
And windowed it with visions sweet,
And floored it with the rosy dreams
That stretched before my happy feet.

But when a deathly storm arose,
And choked the fire and rent the floor
My flowering windows streamed with dark
That flowed with sunny light before.

So now a houseless wanderer
I linger underneath the sky ;
My house of love is left a wreck
Within the lane of memory.

Is left a wreck. But night once more
Enroofs me with a tender smile,
And gives me back my rosy floor
A little while — a little while.

THE WORLD WELL LOST

My one dark love shall fix the day,
The solemn day when we shall wed;
Nor know I if on green or gray,
On winter white or autumn red,

My happy bridal moon shall rise,
Nor which of all the blossoming Mays
Shall wreath the gates of Paradise
Upon my dark love's day of days.

But this I know: her steps will be
Like rose leaves falling from the rose,
Her eyes a fathomless strange sea
To which my stream of being flows;

And this I know, her lips will rest
As lightly on the drowsing lid
As leafy shadows on the breast
Of some sweet grave all flower-hid.

In some sweet grave all flower-hid,
A thousand times the blooms of May
Shall visit us the leaves amid,
When my love, Death, has named the day.

UNKNOWN CHILDREN

I meet them in the country lane,
In village shop and city street,
With cheeks all glowing in the rain,
Or voices gladdening in the sleet,
Or eyes enraptured with the snow —
The children I should like to know.

How fair creation is to them !
Unweighted by the cloak of years
They dance upon its lustrous hem,
And lose in rainbows all their tears.
How easily the hearts o'erflow
Of children we should like to know !

Their sleep is deeper than our peace,
Their waking gladder than our dreams.
Their guardian angels never cease
To speak to them in winds and streams.
The days are lifetimes, sweet and slow,
To children we should like to know.

O little heart above this page,
The road is long, the road is hard.
But do not thou obscure in age
That early sky so thickly starred.
Keep sweet the faith of long ago,
Dear child, whom I shall never know.

RESPONSIVENESS

The leaves within the orchard walls
 Give to the wind at play
Light-hearted plunges, leaps and falls
 Throughout the summer day.
And yet with still, unswerving power
The fruit is ripening hour by hour.

So have I seen a spirit strong
 Give to a passing breeze
Of jest and laughter, mirth and song,
 Compliant courtesies;
And his soul's purpose lost no whit
Of that great strength that flowed to it.

A HAPPY LOT

To-day I took the special book
 That doth my spirit please
Out to the tree, where, after tea,
 I like to lie at ease.

The boughs were long. A bluebird's song
 Blent with the printed words.
I seemed to hear a poet near
 And read the thoughts of birds.

To me there's not a happier lot
 On earth than comes with these:
A book that sings, a bird that brings
 Leaf-shadowed reveries.

ANOTHER YEAR

"Another year," we mourn, "another year
Has gone," and look with mingled grief and fear
At all our vanished years — a goodly sum —
And think with pain how few the years to come.

As it might be some ignorant small child
Roaming in forests limitless and wild,
Should cry with apprehension, fear and grief,
"Another leaf has dropped, another leaf."

Compared with periods that angels count,
Six years and sixty seem the same amount.
We mourn the pebbles washed into the sea,
Forgetting that we own eternity.

APRIL BUDS

Buds on the living tree,
Buds in the heart.
Tree hopes and heart hopes,
Thickly they start.

If to the cold ground
All the hopes depart,
Trustfully looks the tree,
Why not the heart?

NEWS OF LIFE

A bird flew in at my window,
"That's news of death," they said.
O heart life-packed, it was heaven you lacked,
As you suffered and strove and fled.

A message of life you bring me :
Caught fast in the strange unknown,
We strive with the gloom in earth's low room,
Then escape to our skies — our own.

REMINDER

Bold as thou art,
There cometh one more bold,
To turn thy strenuous heart
All masterless and cold.

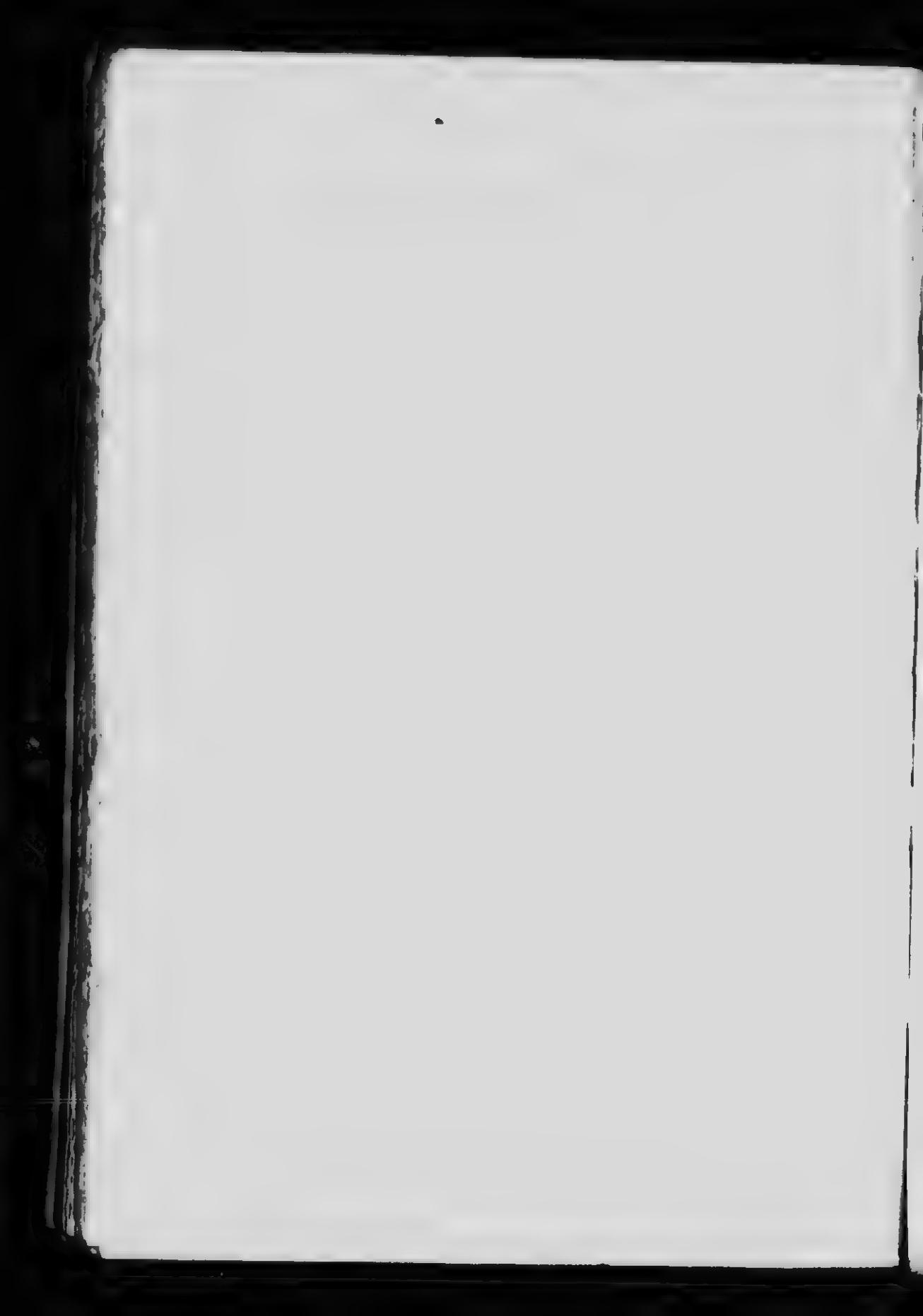
Unmoved, strong-stayed
Art thou? Yet cometh one
Whose whisper will persuade
Thee with him to be gone.

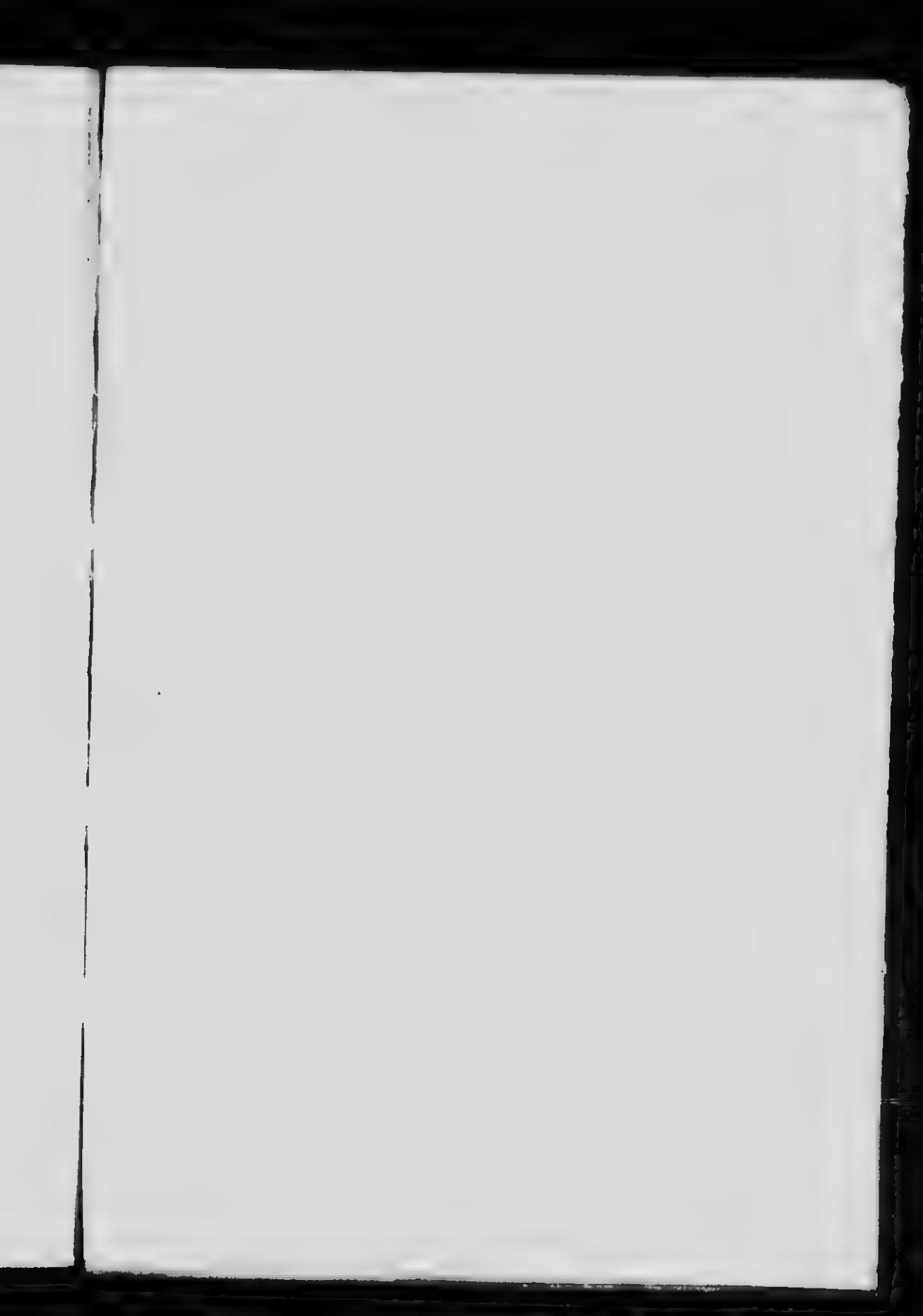
King of the fray?
Lord of the time and race?
And yet shall come the ray
To light thy vacant place.

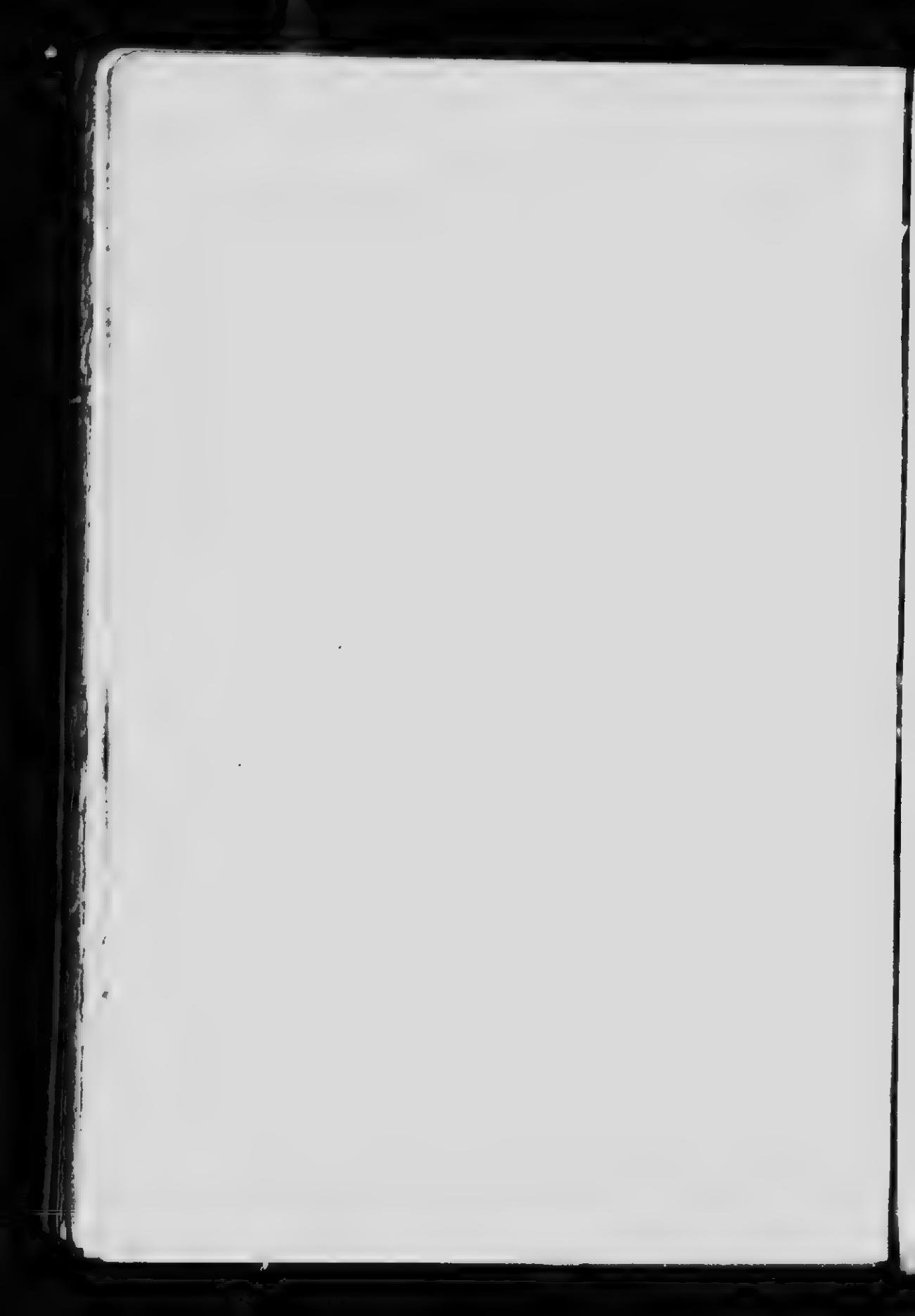
LUCK IN THE HOUSE

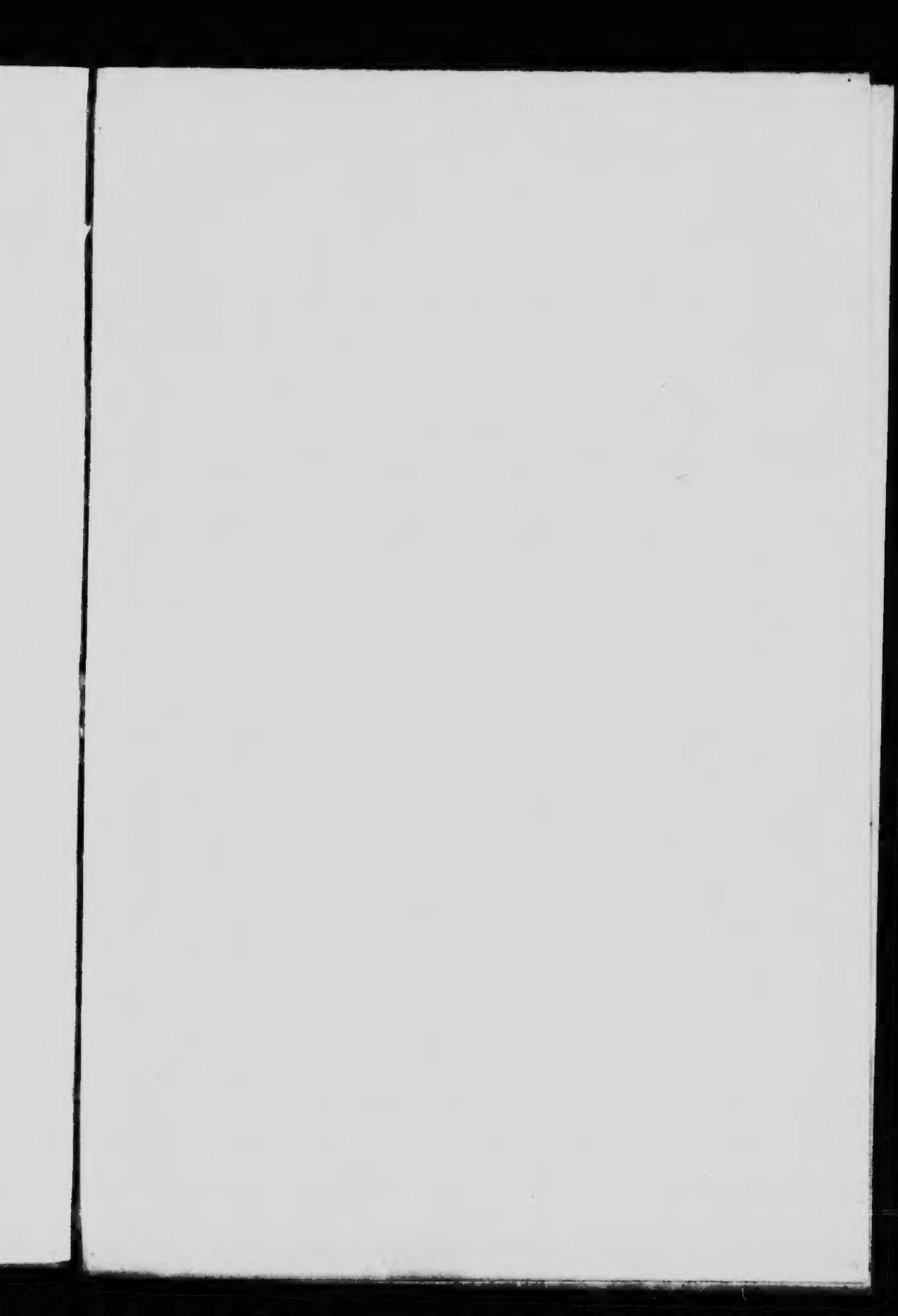
My love departs in the morning;
Good-bye, my love, good-bye !
I work the harder when you're gone,
The happier when you're nigh.
The busy hours will bring their cares,
Their trials great and small,
Their petty frets, their vain regrets,
And I must meet them all.
For there's nae luck aboot the hoose,
There's nae luck at a',
There's nae luck aboot the hoose
When my gude mon's awa'.

My love returns at night-fall ;
Come in, my love, come in !
About my waist his arm is placed,
His hand beneath my chin.
The weariness, the troubled thought,
The sense of weight and care,
Are all become as they were naught,
And vanished into air.
For there's great luck aboot the hoose,
And peace too deep for name,
There's great luck aboot the hoose
When my gude mon's at hame.

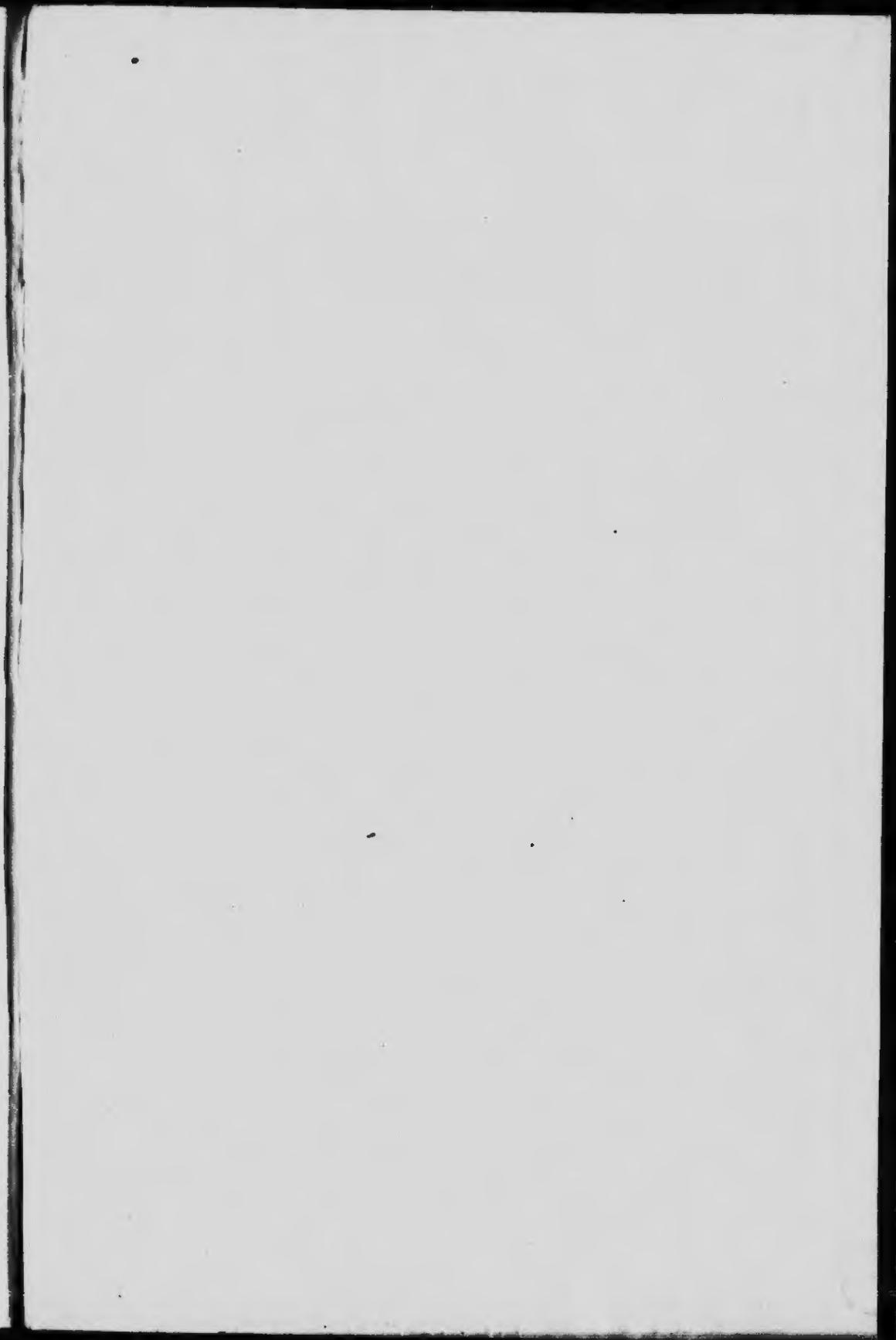








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THE RADIANT ROAD.

E. ETHELVYN WETHERALD